

As a consumer of digital content, I have a grave concern about the proposed Broadcast Flag. Presently, consumers are permitted to copy (tape) all analog video programs transmitted by over-the-air (OTA), cable or satellite. The same rule should apply with respect to the transmission of digital programs.

I am an advocate of high definition broadcasts. I truly believe that once an individual view a true HD picture, that person will want to purchase a HD set, facilitating the transistion from the present analog transmission scheme to the 2006 digital transmission scheme. However, the stumbling block to this goal is the conumer's inability to record such HD content. Every time a person asks me how to record such programs, I must respond that the content providers wish to prevent the recording of their programs. When people hear this, they state that while the HD picture is wonderful, they will stay with analog, so that they can record said programs.

Thus, if the FCC mandates the inclusion of a broadcast flag that prevents (or even limits) the ability to record digitally ALL that can now be recorded in the analog domain, the FCC will effectively kill all prospects of getting the analog bandwidth back in 2006.

I am a law-abiding consumer (and a patent attorney), who believes that piracy should be prevented and prosecuted. However, if theoretical prevention comes at the cost of prohibiting me from making legal, personal use of my content, then the FCC should be working to protect all consumers rather than enable those who would restrict consumer rights.

Thank you  
Steve Wegman